



Parents: Help your child prepare now for the road ahead

With the right education, a marketable skill and good mentors, today's teenagers have unlimited career opportunities.

Research has shown that your influence plays an important role in helping your child make early career decisions.

Set aside time to talk to your child about career choices, options available in high school, and beyond.



START YOUR STUDY HERE:

Guide to Career Prospects in Virginia www.careerprospects.org
Virginia Career VIEW www.vacareerview.org
Virginia Career Education Foundation www.knowhowvirginia.org
r u ready? www.rureadyvirginia.com
Virginia's Career Planning System <http://va.kuder.com>

Other college and financial aid resources

Explore Virginia Colleges
www.explorevirginiacolleges.org

Virginia's Private Colleges
www.cicv.org

Virginia Community College System
www.vccs.edu

Paying for College
www.schev.edu/Students/PayForCollege.asp

Virginia Career Resource Network
www.vacrn.net



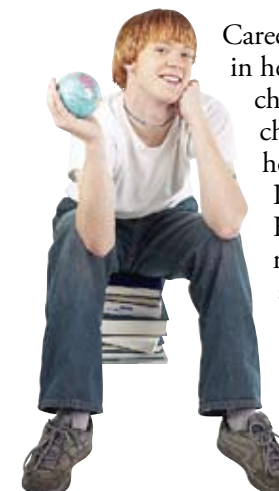
DO YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD?

Your child's report card doesn't necessarily reflect his or her interests. Whether your child is a straight A student or struggles to get Cs, it's likely he or she is more passionate about some subjects than others.

Work with your child to help him or her figure out who he or she is and where his or her strengths and weaknesses lie.

- Is your child more of a conformist or more of an independent thinker?
- Will your son or daughter be happy to wear business dress every day and work in an office?
- Will he or she be happier being his or her own boss?
- Is money a driving force in his or her life?
- Will he or she thrive in a job that's mentally, physically or emotionally demanding?

Career assessments are a valuable tool in helping you learn more about your child's interests and skills. Ask your child's guidance counselor about how to access Virginia's Career Planning System powered by Kuder, which is provided to all middle and high school students at <http://va.kuder.com>



☐ Help your child with self-analysis.

HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- ☐ I know what the state and local graduation requirements are, and I have incorporated those in my high school course plan.
- ☐ I know what courses are required for my educational and career future. I have included those in my high school plan.
- ☐ I am aware of career interest activities and programs offered at my high school and I have included those in my high school plan.
- ☐ I am familiar with exams required for further education or entry into my career.
- ☐ I know what kind of future education and training I need for my career and the steps I have to take to get it.
- ☐ I am aware of the cost of any education I may need after high school and the steps I must take to finance them.
- ☐ Other things to consider or accomplish during high school:



WHAT IS A CAREER PATH?

Even if you're the third generation in your family to be a mechanic or a lawyer, try to set aside your own successes and disappointments and allow your child to be his or her own person. Equally, if you're, say, a computer technician and your child really and truly is a chip off the old block, then perhaps a career in technology might be

worth encouraging. One thing's for sure, every industry — even at the entry-level — is becoming increasingly high-tech.

- How can your child figure out what he or she wants to do?
- Are there occupations that match his or her interests?

Understanding the array of career paths is the first step toward you and your child understanding what's out there. If your child doesn't know what a harbor pilot or an actuary or a materials scientist does, they're automatically limiting their options.

☐ **Help your child explore various careers.**

WHICH CAREER CLUSTERS INTEREST YOU?

☐ **Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources**

Careers related to agriculture and environmental management

☐ **Architecture & Construction**

Careers related to designing, constructing, managing, and maintaining industrial and commercial facilities, housing, bridges and roads

☐ **Arts, Audio Visual Technology & Communications**

Careers related to writing, performing, and the visual arts, advertising, and TV broadcast, digital, print, and recording media

☐ **Business, Management & Administration**

Careers related to human resources, accounting, management, administration, information processing, and other services

☐ **Education & Training**

Careers related to education, training, and learning support services

☐ **Finance**

Careers related to banking, investment, insurance, and financial planning services

☐ **Government & Public Administration**

Careers related to legislative, administrative, and regulatory services at the federal, state and local levels

☐ **Health Sciences**

Careers related to research, diagnosis, treatments, and environmental information services

☐ **Hospitality & Tourism**

Careers related to convention and tourism recreation, food, lodging, and other services

☐ **Human Services**

Careers related to human services, including social and other community services

☐ **Information Technology**

Careers related to developing and supporting multimedia hardware, software and systems integration

☐ **Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security**

Careers related to judicial, legal, fire, and other protective services

☐ **Manufacturing**

Careers related to processing materials into intermediate or final products

☐ **Marketing, Sales & Service**

Careers related to wholesaling, retailing, product management, marketing, and distribution of merchandise

☐ **Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics**

Careers related to physical and related science, engineering and technical services

☐ **Transportation, Distribution & Logistics**

Careers related to the equipment and infrastructure needed to move people and materials by air, rail, road, water or pipeline

TEST-DRIVING A CAREER

Whenever possible, encourage your child to seek career experience related to his or her interests. There are different types of career experiences — shadowing, mentoring, cooperative education, internships, and apprenticeships. On-the-job experience can be the ultimate reality check.

Also, encourage your child to talk to college-age students and to people in careers in which he or she is interested. Your son or

daughter should ask such questions as:

- What is it really like as an apprentice or as a student at a community college or university?
- How did you choose your major?
- Did you take the right courses in high school?
- How much does it cost to continue your education?
- What do you like about your chosen career?
- How did you choose your career?
- Did your education relate to your ultimate career choice?

☐ **Help your child arrange career experiences.**

TOP 20 FASTEST GROWING OCCUPATIONS IN VIRGINIA

Occupation	2002 Employment	Projected 2012 Employment	2002-2012 Percentage Change	Average Annual Openings	Preferred Education Level
Network Systems Analysts	5,507	9,308	69%	531	4-Year Degree
Medical Assistants	7,206	12,146	69%	525	CTE/Certification
Database Administrators	4,911	7,864	60%	324	4-Year Degree
Physical Therapist Aides	916	1,456	59%	63	CTE/Certification
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	1,169	1,847	58%	71	2-Year Degree
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,229	1,918	56%	81	2-Year Degree
Personal Financial Advisers	2,072	3,220	55%	176	4-Year Degree
Software Engineers, Applications	24,293	37,650	55%	1,398	4-Year Degree
Health Information Technicians	3,353	5,127	53%	193	2-Year Degree
Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	2,075	3,165	53%	135	2- or 4-Year Degree
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	5,196	7,880	52%	357	CTE/Certification
Software Engineers, Systems Software	18,660	28,293	52%	1,094	4-Year Degree
Home Health Aides	9,238	13,966	51%	497	CTE/Certification
Dental Hygienists	3,922	5,897	50%	215	2-Year Degree
Network and Systems Administrators	12,274	18,451	50%	610	4-Year Degree
Environmental Engineers	1,606	2,402	50%	138	Master's Degree
Dental Assistants	7,404	11,061	49%	535	CTE/Certification
Computer and Information Systems Managers	10,215	15,099	48%	591	4-Year Degree
Residential Advisers	1,310	1,913	46%	60	2- or 4-Year Degree
Management Analysts	30,973	45,216	46%	1,436	4-Year Degree

* Based on specific occupations with the largest percent increase in employment from 2002-2012

**The National average percent change for all occupations is 15%. Virginia's average percentage for all occupations is 18.5%.

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia's Electronic Labor Market Access (<http://velma.virtualmi.com>)

WHICH OCCUPATIONS INTEREST YOU?

Review your answers to the questions from “Help Your Child Plan for the Future.” Develop a list of occupations that match your skills, strengths, and interests.

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What kinds of education and training do you need for the occupations listed?

- ☐ High school diploma
- ☐ On-the-job training
- ☐ Apprenticeship
- ☐ Career and technical education
- ☐ Two-year associate's degree
- ☐ Four-year bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctoral degree
- ☐ Other

HELP YOUR CHILD PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Use this handy guide with your child to begin the important process of planning for the future. Keep it in a special place to review and update regularly. Start by discussing the following questions:

What are your favorite courses?

What extracurricular activities do you enjoy most?

What do you like to do with family or friends?

Which of your special skills are most valuable to you?
Why?

What achievements make you most proud?

What do you want to be when you grow up?

What are your favorite hobbies and interests?

What do you like to do with your free time?

CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS PLANNING FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

- ☐ I have selected several educational and training options that I may pursue upon graduation from high school. I am making arrangements to visit their facilities.
- ☐ I have written for applications for admission to the technical school, community college, college, training program or apprenticeship of my choice ... or submitted my application via the Internet.
- ☐ I have taken required preliminary or entrance exams and submitted results to my programs of choice.
- ☐ I have arranged to send official high school transcripts to my programs of choice.
- ☐ I have investigated and applied for scholarships, financial aid, work-study programs, and other tuition assistance.
- ☐ Other things to consider regarding further education after high school:

CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS PLANNING TO ENTER THE WORK FORCE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

- ☐ I have enrolled in a co-op, Tech Prep, youth apprenticeship or other program to prepare for entry into my chosen career path.
- ☐ I have joined a high school organization related to my career interest.
- ☐ I have prepared a portfolio, a résumé, and a model cover letter. I have two versions of my résumé — one that can be printed and another that is suitable for online job placement sites.
- ☐ I have made arrangements with my high school career counselor or with a counselor at a local placement agency for help in finding a job.
- ☐ I have special clothing set aside for interviewing.
- ☐ Other things to consider related to finding a job after high school in my career field:

EDUCATION PATHS

There are many paths leading to a career. For example:

1. Mentorship — A career-information relationship between a student and a person employed in the career area in which the student is interested. The student learns about the workplace and the career area through participation in non-paid activities directed by the mentor. Mentoring is usually longer in duration and intensity and more complex than a job-shadowing experience.

2. Job shadowing — A short-term, non-paid career experience planned so that students learn about the workplace by observing individuals at work in a job that relates to the student's interests, aptitudes, and abilities.

3. Cooperative education — Earn and learn through cooperative education. Career and technical classroom instruction is combined with paid employment directly related to classroom learning. Student instruction and employment experiences are planned and supervised by the school and the employer so that each contributes to the student's career objective and employability.

4. Career and technical programs within high schools — These programs provide a jump-start for careers. They provide employment training in a huge array of occupations by mixing work-based experience and classroom instruction. Students can earn state licensure and certifications for careers as varied as a cosmetologist,

certified Internet Web site designer, heat pump installation technician, certified nursing assistant, and Microsoft certified database administrator.

5. On-the-job training straight out of high school — Entry-level jobs require training at the place of employment for career advancement or even to stay at the same level. Earning potential, however, will be limited unless the employee is particularly competent or creative.

6. Apprenticeships — Earn and learn! This path prepares students for specific careers by combining related instruction with on-the-job supervision by experienced professionals. There are over 300 registered occupations offering apprenticeships in Virginia, from electricians and plumbers to law enforcement agents and chefs.

7. Career and technical programs within community colleges — Virginia's 23 community colleges provide three alternatives: advanced technical training for certification in a wide array of fields; tech prep, a four-year continuous program (combines two years of high school and two years after high-school graduation); and preparation for a four-year college. Averaging less than \$2,000 per year, community college is a fraction of the cost of state universities.

8. Private career schools — High-speed, high-dollar courses can prepare students for careers such as network engineering, real estate sales, and culinary arts. These private technical and vocational schools offer intensive, short-term training.

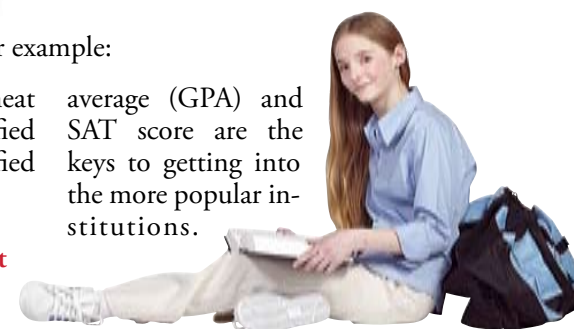
9. Four-year colleges or universities — A high school diploma, a high grade-point

average (GPA) and SAT score are the keys to getting into the more popular institutions.

The college program chosen should be related to the student's career interests. A four-year bachelor's degree is a prerequisite for graduate-level studies. This degree will lay the foundation for a variety of career paths and is usually the basic requirement for entering the professional world. Academics are usually supplemented by social and sporting events, especially at residential schools. In-state tuition is less expensive than out-of-state, and state schools are generally less expensive than private schools. Visit www.vacareerview.org.

10. Graduate school — Start saving because graduate school can be expensive. Usually, a higher level of education means a higher level of income. Doctors, lawyers, and professors, plus many Wall Street-types, have master's or doctoral degrees. Admittance to a program usually involves analysis of undergraduate transcripts, some standardized placement tests plus letters of recommendation and personal statements. If this path isn't carefully planned, the student may lack some of the criteria for entering graduate school.

11. Military — The armed forces employ more than combat personnel. There are thousands of careers available within the army, marines, navy, air force, and coast guard — from meteorologists and dentists to engineers and entertainers. Best of all, the 10,000 courses offered are free.



Ensure that your child meets with a guidance counselor or other career specialist to choose a curriculum that reflects your child's aptitudes, abilities, and career interests.

We spend most of our lives making a living. That's why it's important to help your child make the best possible career choices. A lot of wasted time, money, and frustration can be avoided by thinking things through from the very beginning.

That means right now!